



# **STATE OF MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES DIVISION OF FAMILY SERVICES**

## **CHILD WELFARE REVIEW: GREENE COUNTY**

### **FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Presented to  
Department of Social Services  
Director, Steve Roling  
March 31, 2003



# FOCUS OF OUR REVIEW



## WHAT WE DID

- CONDUCTED FOUR DAY REVIEW ON MARCH 4-7, 2003 IN GREENE COUNTY
- ASSIGNED TEAM OF SIX EXPERIENCED CHILD WELFARE SPECIALISTS
- CONDUCTED INTERVIEWS WITH MANAGEMENT AND STAFF
- REVIEWED CURRENT PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES AND OTHER AVAILABLE DOCUMENTATION

## AREAS OF FOCUS

- GOALS AND MISSION
- ORGANIZATION AND STAFFING
- CASE MANAGEMENT PROCESSES
- SUPERVISORY REVIEW AND QUALITY ASSURANCE
- CONTRACTED PROVIDER MANAGEMENT PROCESSES
- FINANCIAL ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION



# MAJOR STRENGTHS IDENTIFIED

- HIGHLY DEDICATED AND CONCERNED STAFF
- CONSISTENT USE OF FAMILY SUPPORT TEAM MODEL
- STRONG ELIGIBILITY PROCESS: ONE OF FEW STATES TO PASS FEDERAL AUDIT
- EFFECTIVE STAFF RECRUITMENT/RETENTION; SUPPORT FOR BACHELOR OF SOCIAL WORK INTERNSHIP PROGRAM AND MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK PROGRAM
- GOOD FOSTER CARE TRAINING PROGRAM
- NEW POLICY MANUAL BEING IMPLEMENTED
- CONTINUITY OF STAFF ASSIGNED TO WORK WITH FAMILIES
- GOOD QUALITY ASSURANCE MECHANISMS EXIST

# SUMMARY OBSERVATIONS



## AREAS FOR ATTENTION

- PERFORMANCE TRACKING/MANAGEMENT INFRASTRUCTURE
  - LIMITED CASE TRACKING AND CONTROL FOR CRITICAL EVENTS AND DECISIONS; MULTIPLE DATA SYSTEMS
  - PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY LACKING AT ALL LEVELS
  - QUALITY ASSURANCE NOT TIED TO CORE OUTCOMES
  - BACKGROUND SCREENING OF ABUSE REPORTS NOT BROAD ENOUGH
  - LIMITED COMPREHENSIVE MONTHLY PERFORMANCE REPORTING AROUND CHILD SAFETY, PERMANENCY AND WELL BEING
  - SUPERVISORY REVIEW PROTOCOLS FOR TEACHING AND CASE REVIEW ABSENT
  - MODEL CASE FILE POLICY NOT IMPLEMENTED
  - ELIGIBILITY WORKER-TO-CASE RATIO TOO HIGH

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- DEVELOP COMPREHENSIVE CASE TRACKING, CONTROL AND RECONCILIATION OF SYSTEMS
- OBTAIN CRIMINAL, WELFARE, MENTAL HEALTH, DEVELOPMENTAL HISTORIES
- DEVELOP MONTHLY PERFORMANCE REPORT FOCUSED ON CORE OUTCOMES; USE BOTH AVAILABLE DATA AND SAMPLE CASE REVIEW
- USE PERFORMANCE REPORT AT STAFF, UNIT, OFFICE, CIRCUIT AND STATEWIDE LEVELS
- BUILD STANDARD SUPERVISORY REVIEW PROTOCOLS FOR TEACHING AND FOR CASE OVERSIGHT AND APPROVALS
- DEVELOP INDEPENDENT, QUARTERLY QUALITY ASSURANCE FOR OUTCOME-ORIENTED CASE REVIEW
- IMPLEMENT THE MODEL CASE FILE POLICY, AS SPECIFIED IN POLICY MANUAL
- ADDRESS ELIGIBILITY WORKER-TO-CASE RATIO



# SUMMARY OBSERVATIONS CONTINUED

## AREAS FOR ATTENTION

- **CONTRACT PROVIDER MANAGEMENT AND LICENSING**
  - FOSTER CARE RESOURCES DECREASING; SLOW PROCESS TO OBTAIN NEW HOMES; LARGE NUMBER OF OUT OF COUNTY PLACEMENTS
  - QUALITY ASSURANCE MONITORING INSUFFICIENT FOR CONTRACTED PROVIDER; LACKING LOCAL WORKER INPUT
- **JUVENILE COURT/DIVISION OF FAMILY SERVICES INTERACTIONS**
  - BETTER TEAM WORK WITH COURT NEEDED
  - COMMON GOALS AND OUTCOMES NOT WELL DEFINED
  - EFFECTIVE USE OF FAMILY SUPPORT TEAM MODEL
- **STAFF TRAINING AND COMMUNICATION**
  - WORKERS AND SUPERVISORS NEED MORE COMPREHENSIVE TRAINING
  - FORMAL STAFF COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM NEEDED
  - EFFECTIVE USE OF FAMILY SUPPORT TEAM MODEL

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- IMPLEMENT TARGETED, COMMUNITY-BASED FOSTER CARE RECRUITMENT/RETENTION; STREAMLINE LICENSING, TRAINING AND RECRUITMENT PROCESS
- STRENGTHEN QUALITY ASSURANCE/ PERFORMANCE REPORTING FOR CONTRACTED PROVIDERS; GAIN INSIGHTS OF LOCAL OFFICES
- CONVENE REGULAR MEETINGS AND DEVELOP A MORE EFFECTIVE WORKING ALLIANCE WITH COURT
- DEVELOP COMPREHENSIVE TRAINING RELATED TO DAY- TO-DAY EXPERIENCE FOR WORKERS; TRAIN SUPERVISORS AS CHILD WELFARE SUPERVISORS
- IMPROVE FORMAL STAFF COMMUNICATIONS; USE WEB SITE
- TRAIN DFS AND COURTS ON EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF FAMILY SUPPORT TEAM MODEL